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**DRUG DEALER SENTENCED TO PRISON TERM FOR
ILLEGALLY DISTRIBUTING PRESCRIPTION NARCOTICS**

HOUSTON, TX – Eric Earl Craft, 38, convicted of conspiracy to illegally distribute million of tabs of hydrocodone and thousands of gallons of promethazine with codeine, was sentenced today to 78 months in federal prison, without parole, announced United States Attorney Don DeGabrielle. The sentence was imposed by United States District Judge David Hittner, who also presided over the two-week jury trial in the fall of 2005 that resulted in the jury finding Craft guilty of illegally distributing a total of 1.7 million tablets of hydrocodone and 2,500 gallons of promethazine with codeine, a highly addictive narcotic cough suppressant, between October 2002 and December 2003.

The investigation the led to Craft's indictment and ultimate conviction also included the indictment of six Houston-area pharmacists, Callie Hall Herpin, M.D., 34, Etta Mae Williams, 47, Karen B. Williams, 40, Darryl Armstrong, 41, and Paul Henry, 40, and Omar Fahie, 24, and Will Bailey, III, 36

The evidence presented at trial proved that Dr. Callie Herpin, with the assistance of Etta and Karen Williams, routinely sold prescriptions for hydrocodone and promethazine with codeine for cash to individuals who did not have a medical need for the drugs. Dr. Herpin, Etta Williams, Darryl Armstrong, and Omar Fahie each testified during the trial. Dr. Herpin testified that her medical practice consisted of selling prescriptions to individuals. Some individuals purchased prescriptions just for themselves while others purchased stacks written for either friends who never appeared in Dr. Herpin's office or for fictitious persons. When the prescriptions were written for fictitious persons, Etta Williams testified that she and Karen Williams created lists. Those lists would consist of names from the phonebook, along with addresses, fictitious telephone numbers, and dates of birth. The lists were used by Dr. Herpin to write the prescriptions and ultimately by five of the six pharmacists to fill the illegal prescriptions.

Individuals, including co-defendants Eric Craft and Omar Fahie, at times purchased 100-400 of these illegal prescriptions from Herpin's office and then had them filled at the pharmacies owned by the pharmacist co-defendants. Fahie and others testified that they sold the illegally obtained narcotics on the street.

The evidence proved the pharmacists used the phony identifying information from the prescriptions and/or the lists to create patient profiles in their records for the fictitious individuals. Each of the indicted pharmacists filled hundreds of illegal prescriptions from Dr. Herpin.

Six of the convicted pharmacists have already been sentenced.

Otukayode Adeleke Otufale, the owner of Med Stop Pharmacy, formerly located at 5901 Hillcroft, was sentenced to 120 months in prison for illegally dispensing over 658,000 hydrocodone pills and more than 976 gallons of promethazine with codeine.

Isaac Simeon Achobe, the owner of American Choice Pharmacy located at 8449 W. Bellfort, was sentenced to 63 months in prison and fined \$5,000 for illegally dispensing over 16,000 hydrocodone pills and more than 33 gallons of promethazine with codeine.

Chicha Kazembe Combs and Andre` Dion Brown, co-owners of Mason Road Pharmacy, formerly located at 829 S. Mason Road, Katy, Texas, were each sentenced to 120 months in prison for illegally dispensed over 183,000 hydrocodone pills and more than 254 gallons of promethazine with codeine.

Anthony Dwayne Essett, 39 and John David Wiley III, 41, co-owners of I-10 East Pharmaceutical Services, located at 11929 I-10 East, were sentenced to 151 months and 120 months, respectively, for illegally dispensing over 290,000 hydrocodone pills and more than 411 gallons of promethazine with codeine.

The remaining seven indicted defendants have also been convicted and are scheduled to be sentenced in the coming months for their roles in the prescription drug conspiracy.

The successful prosecution was the result of a joint investigation by agents of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General (HHS/OIG), the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation (IRS/CI), and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). This case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Al Balboni.

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